



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

ELIZABETHAN STUDIES: SECOND SERIES

Studies in Philology

VOLUME XIV

APRIL, 1917

NUMBER 2

FOREWORD

As a contribution to the Shakespeare Tercentenary last year, the April issue of *STUDIES IN PHILOLOGY* was devoted to essays on Elizabethan themes. The idea has seemed worth further development, and this year a larger volume is presented, with contributions from a number of scholars who are identified with research in the life and letters of the English Renaissance, and with the addition of a bibliography of important recent literature in this field. If these studies meet with favor, it is proposed to devote the April issue of the journal each year to a similar purpose.

Such a collection of essays has certain values quite apart from the merit of the contributions that compose it. A single great period is here studied from different angles. In this way these essays gain a totality of effect that would have been impossible had they appeared in a number of periodicals scattered through a dozen months. They suggest a coöperation in scholarly work that is capable of indefinite expansion. Such coöperation is a well-known and inspiring fact in the fields of scientific and historical research, and it is being greatly extended at the present time. Professor Fletcher, in his thoughtful address as president of the Modern Language Association, recently suggested that one reason why philological research has such slight influence on the thought of our time is that it makes small effort to relate itself to that thought. But the individual scholar can do little in isolation. We may learn from medical research the lesson that the enormous advances made toward the conquest of disease in recent years have been due in large part to collaboration among specialists profoundly interested in finding solutions for one or another of the problems confronting their profession. Recently, also, the same lesson has been learned by experts in chemistry, who have found how to relate research to life through coöperation in the effort to

solve certain practical problems made acute because American industry was suddenly cut off from foreign sources of supply. And through similar collaboration it may be possible for us to find how humanistic study may justify its right to exist in a world in which all things of the spirit are now in deadly peril.

With the vast increase, in recent years, in both the resources and the materials of philological scholarship, we have almost reached, if indeed we have not reached, a period when a new synthesis of this learning is a fundamental duty. Such a synthesis may be accomplished, in part, by individual scholars who grasp the opportunity suggested in Professor Fletcher's address. In part it may be aided through the coöperation of groups interested in one phase or another of modern humanistic study. Greater impetus and direction might be gained, perhaps, through organization. To use an illustration suggested by the group of studies here presented, those who are especially interested in the different phases of the study of the Renaissance might well form an Elizabethan Society. Such a society, if formed, should have for its object not alone the production of monographs on Elizabethan literature. It should include in its membership those scholars who are interested in history as well as in philology. Its fundamental purpose should be interpretation: interpretation of the thought and life of a period of unexampled richness; interpretation of the vast accumulation of research that has grown up about this thought and life and that threatens now to bury it beneath mere impedimenta; interpretation of present problems by bringing to bear upon them the penetrating influence of such concentrated human experience. For example, the society should be interested not only in stage history and dramatic technique but also in the revival of Elizabethan plays in our colleges, in community pageants, and in other attempts to revive the impulse that created our national drama. This is but one illustration; others of perhaps greater significance might be given to show how scholarship, without losing any of its richness or impugning in any way its divine prerogative, may yet be brought into more intimate contact with life.

That radical changes in American education are at hand is beyond question. To think that the issue lies between compulsory Greek and compulsory vocational training is to start another profitless controversy between the Ancients and the Moderns and to fall into the blindest of errors. But that advanced scholarship, in whatever field, must emerge from its isolation and through both individual and coöperative effort

contribute not alone to learned journals for initiates in the mystery but also to the life of our common humanity is as certain as that America must prepare to take her part in world affairs. In the new age now dawning in America, impulses that enriched the renaissance may once more become active. To foster such impulses is a duty of scholarship now as it was in the humanistic revival of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It might well be the privilege of an Elizabethan Society to initiate a new humanism.

E. G.